

# THE BIRTHPLACE OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

BY GEORGE H. YENOWINE.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN, our great War President, was born in Larue County, Kentucky, in a rude little log-cabin. This cabin has recently been restored, and, so far as possible, made exactly as it was eighty-eight years ago, when a little, baby boy was born to Thomas and Nancy Lincoln, or "Linkhorn," as the name was then spelled — humble "settlers," who had moved to the neighborhood from Washington County, four years before.

The few living people who remember Thomas Lincoln, the father, say that he was a rather, improvident man, not working long at any one thing. He was a hard worker, but was a poor manager; and the little family was often without more than the simplest necessities of life. Thomas Lincoln cleared a few acres around his cabin, and raised a small crop of corn and grain. Then he became a carpenter and tinker, working at such odd jobs as he could find among the pioneer neighbors. He was away at work at the time Abraham was born.

The neighbors heard that Mrs. Lincoln was in the cabin all alone with the little baby, and had little to eat except corn and potatoes. They at once visited the Lincoln cabin, taking such delicacies as their houses afforded. The father returned in a few days; and the baby was named Abraham Lincoln, after his grandfather, who had been killed by the Indians when Thomas Lincoln was a little boy.

When this country boy had become President, he often spoke of the trials and struggles of his early days as "simple annals of privation and of poverty."

The child's life during the time the family lived in Kentucky appears to have been entirely uneventful. He helped his mother — after he was three years old — in the simple household duties, went to the district-school, and played with the children of the neighborhood. The only one of young Lincoln's play-

mates now living is an old man nearly a hundred years old, named Austin Gollaher, whose mind is bright and clear, and who never tires of telling of the days Lincoln and he "were little tikes, and played together." This old man, who yet lives in the log-house in which he has always lived, a few miles from the old Lincoln place, tells entertaining stories about the President's boyhood.

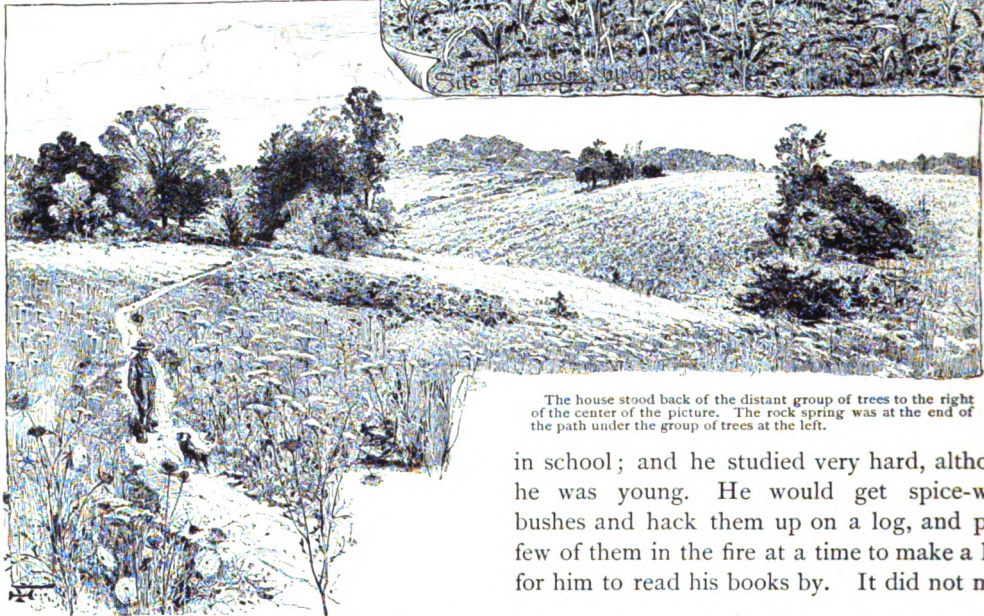
Mr. Gollaher says that they were together more than the other boys in school, that he became fond of his little friend, and he believed that Abe thought a great deal of him.

In speaking of various events of minor importance in their boyhood days, Mr. Gollaher remarked: "I once saved Lincoln's life." Upon being urged to tell of the occurrence, he thus related it: "We had been going to school together one year; but the next year we had no school because there were so few scholars to attend, there being only about twenty in the school the year before. Consequently, Abe and I had not much to do; but, as we did not go to school, and our mothers were strict with us, we did not get to see each other very often. One Sunday morning my mother waked me up early, saying she was going to see Mrs. Lincoln, and that I could go along. Glad of the chance, I was soon dressed and ready to go. After my mother and I got there, Abe and I played all through the day. While we were wandering up and down the little stream called Knob Creek, Abe said: 'Right up there' — pointing to the east — 'we saw a covey of partridges yesterday. Let's go over and get some of them.' The stream was swollen, and was too wide for us to jump across. Finally, we saw a narrow foot-log, and we concluded to try it. It was narrow, but Abe said, 'Let's coon it.' I went first, and reached the other side all right. Abe went about half-way across, when he got scared and began trembling. I hollered to

him, 'Don't look down, nor up, nor sideways, but look right at me, and hold on tight!' But he fell off into the creek, and as the water was about seven or eight feet deep, and I could not swim, and neither could Abe, I knew it would do no good for me to go in after him. So I got a stick—a long water-sprout—and held it out to him. He came up, grabbing with both hands,



A nearer view of the exact place where the log house stood.



VIEW OF THOMAS LINCOLN'S FARM, WHERE ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN.

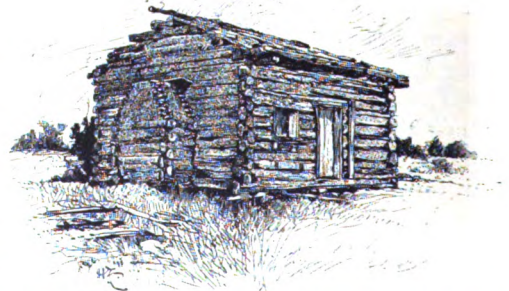
The house stood back of the distant group of trees to the right of the center of the picture. The rock spring was at the end of the path under the group of trees at the left.

in school; and he studied very hard, although he was young. He would get spice-wood bushes and hack them up on a log, and put a few of them in the fire at a time to make a light for him to read his books by. It did not make

and I put the stick into his hands. He clung to it, and I pulled him out on the bank, almost dead. I got him by the arms and shook him well, and then rolled him on the ground, when the water poured out of his mouth. He was all right very soon. We promised each other that we would never tell anybody about it, and never did for years. I never told anyone of it until after Lincoln was killed."

"Was he a bright boy at school, and did he learn rapidly?"

"Oh, yes," he replied; "Lincoln was an unusually bright boy, and he made good progress in his books, better than almost any one else



THE LOG-CABIN IN WHICH ABRAHAM LINCOLN WAS BORN.

From a photograph by The Evans Art Co., Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

a very good light, but it was all he had at night. Young Lincoln was never good-looking. He was angular and awkward. His mother was

a rather slim woman of medium height. Tom Lincoln, his father, was tall. Abe was not very much like him, for Tom Lincoln had a fuller face, and was of a heavier build."

In answer to a question as to Lincoln's brothers or sisters, the old man brightened up and said, "Oh, yes, he had a sister. Her name was Sally, and she was about my age. That was one reason why I thought so much of Abe. But when the Lincolns moved to Indiana, I did not say good-by to either of them.

"I next heard of Lincoln several years afterward. It was said that he would make rails during the summer, and thus earn money to go to school. Then I heard no more of Lincoln, until he was nominated for President. I told the boys that no matter what happened, I was going to vote for Abe. I said I was going to vote for him if it was the last act of my life, because I had played with him when a boy, and I was glad he had gone up in the world; and I did vote for him!" said the old man.

Little Abe was nearly nine years old when Thomas Lincoln left Kentucky to find a home in the wilderness of Indiana.

Twelve years ago, the cabin in which Lincoln was born was torn down, and the logs were hauled to an adjoining farm, and used in the construction of another house. The old farm had practically been abandoned, and nearly all the people in the neighborhood had quite forgotten, a second time within a decade since the death of Lincoln, that he was born on the "Lincoln Spring Farm," as the place has always been called. The Lincoln birthplace is fifty-four miles southeast of Louisville. It can be reached from Louisville by going to Elizabethtown, in Hardin County, a distance of forty-two miles, and then taking another road from Elizabethtown to Hodgenville, a ride of twelve miles. The Lincoln Spring Farm is three miles from this quaint old town, on Nolin's Creek, directly on the public road

leading from Hodgenville to Buffalo, a village six miles to the east. It is a pleasant twenty-minutes' drive over a good dirt road, through a poor, but interesting, country.

The original Lincoln cabin had been torn down and the materials had been moved away, as stated, by a man named Tom Davenport, who used the logs in his own house.

Mr. A. W. Dennett, a New York gentleman, not long ago bought the Davenport house, recovered the logs, and, after much difficulty, restored the cabin exactly as it was originally, using the very same timbers, door, window, and frames. It occupies the former site, and is in much the same condition as it was in when the



"THE LINCOLN SPRING."

From a photograph by The Evans Art Co., Elizabethtown, Kentucky.

Lincolns left it. The cabin is eighteen feet long, sixteen feet wide, and about twelve feet high, counting from the floor to the ridge pole. There is only one door and one window—the latter an opening twenty inches square. A large open fireplace built in the most primitive way occupies nearly the whole of one end of the cabin. The chimney is made of small logs, placed together just as log-houses are built. Inside of it, flat stones placed on the ground made the hearth, and wide flat stones placed against the logs kept the fire within bounds and protected the wooden chimney. The inside, from the hearthstones to the top of the chimney, was thickly daubed with clay. The



chimney reaches only half-way to the roof of the house, and is rounded off with small sticks. This simple fireplace furnished most of the light, all of the heat, and the sole means for cooking the meals for the family. The cabin did not have even a loft, or second story, as have most cabins. It was built by Thomas Lincoln, father of the President, some time about 1804 or 1805, and was entirely constructed with an ax and saw, the simple tools of the pioneers. The clapboard roof was anchored down by small logs, laid lengthwise on top of the rows of oak boards. There were no nails or hardware. The door-hinges were of wood, and the paneless windows had an inside board-shutter, held in place by raw-hide thongs. There were chinks and mud between the logs, and the puncheon floor was pegged down. It is probable that after Abraham Lincoln's grandfather was killed by the Indians at Long Run Meeting-house, in Jefferson County, Ky., the family went further into the forest, and took up a section of land in La Rue, then part of Hardin County. Later, to better his fortune, Thomas Lincoln left this farm on Nolin's Creek, and settled on Knob Creek, a dozen miles from Hodgenville, and from there he went to Indiana, and later to Illinois.

The Lincoln Spring Farm takes its name from a magnificent spring at the foot of the hill, on the crest of which the cabin stands. It is about one hundred and fifty feet from the house, and this beautiful spring undoubtedly attracted the attention of Thomas Lincoln. Under a cluster of large oak-trees there is a circular depression in the ground, fifty feet in diameter, and about fifteen feet deep. One side of this is solid limestone, an overhanging ledge forming the covering for a spring of clear, cool water that issues from a cleft in the rocks, falling a distance of four or five feet. The water gurgles and sputters as it falls from one ledge of the rock to another, and makes its way down into the earth through a natural cavern, or "sink-hole," as the natives call it. The country is hilly, and there are many caves, and this overflow that so mysteriously disappears probably escapes through some underground passage,

like the rivers that flow through the Mammoth Cave in Edmonson County, forty miles away. There are also disappearing rivers, or creeks, in this section of Kentucky. Streams sometimes end abruptly, disappearing in the ground without any visible outlet, and reappearing miles away in a like mysterious manner.

The oldest inhabitants agree that the place has always been called "The Lincoln Spring," and it is more than likely that the future President played, until four or five years of age, under the shade-trees around this beautiful natural fountain. The new owner of the place wishes to convert it into a national park, a sort of patriotic Mecca, as has been done at Mount Vernon. The property has been surrounded by a good substantial fence, the old, sterile hillsides have been plowed up, and the slopes are covered with grass. Most of the young trees have been trimmed and left standing, and in a few years the old farm will become a spot of great beauty.

The revival of interest in the early career of the great War President has caused many people to make pilgrimages to the primitive city of Hodgenville, a place of about 1,000 inhabitants. Many people come in search of Lincoln relics. Very recently a queerly-made iron candle-stick was plowed up near the cabin, and it is the general belief that it was made by the President's father, who had a small blacksmith's forge in his yard.

The family having moved to Indiana, when Abraham was about nine years old, and very soon thereafter to Illinois, the serious part of young Lincoln's life began. He worked day and night, and read borrowed books until he had gained a fair education, and was finally enabled to begin the practice of law. The life of Lincoln after his thirtieth year is familiar to almost every boy and girl in the wide land.

There was not a year's difference between the ages of Abraham Lincoln and Jefferson Davis; and it is an interesting fact that the President of the Confederacy also was born in Kentucky, and within a hundred miles of the log-cabin that was the birthplace of President Lincoln.

## WILLIE AND TAD LINCOLN.

BY JULIA TAFT BAYNE.



WILLIE LINCOLN.

SPRING in Washington was never more beautiful than in April, 1861, when my two brothers and I crossed Lafayette Square on our way to the White House.

My mother had sent us "to play with the Lincoln boys." Mrs. Lincoln had told how lonely her sons were, and asked to have my brothers come and play with Willie and Tad. I was sent with them to see the acquaintance properly begun. We had been to the White House often before; for Mr. Watt, who had charge of the conservatory and grounds, was our very good friend, and showed us the rare flowers, and talked about them, and often gave us bouquets, which we thought marvelously beautiful, made up by the "bouquet man" on a fixed plan—the short-stemmed flowers tied on

broom-straws and built into solid oval structures surrounded by a fringe of green.

We lingered in the Square, which was filled with nursemaids and children, many of whom we knew; for to-day we felt a strange reluctance and hesitation. Instead of going to the entrance and asking for the boys, as our mother had suggested, we skirted the Treasury Building, and went in at the little gate back of it to the grounds. Assuring ourselves that things were outwardly the same under the new administration, we entered Mr. Watt's office under the conservatory, and he called up the stairs:



TAD LINCOLN, IN HIS ZOUAVE UNIFORM.

"Here!—Willie! Tad!—are some boys come to see you." No answer was returned, and we went up, and there stood the boys by the water-

lily tank, where they had been watching the goldfish. Such quiet, shy, nice boys, I thought.

In five minutes the four boys had disappeared, and I saw them no more till dark, when my brothers returned home, looking—as Larney, our mulatto girl, declared—“like they done bin huntin’ coons in de bresh”; but they had had “the best time they ever had”; they had been “everywhere,” and Mrs. Lincoln said they “must come every day,” and “Mr. Lincoln, I mean, the President—she called him Mr. Lincoln, anyway—took us all on his lap, and told us a story.”

Early next morning Willie and Tad appeared at our house, brought by one of the gardeners, and remained all day, being sent for at night.

Thus began an intimacy which continued till Willie’s death. I think there was hardly a day in that time when the four were not together.

Willie Lincoln was the most lovable boy I ever knew—sensible, sweet-tempered, and gentle-mannered. He was rather fair, with blue-gray eyes, while Tad had quick, dark eyes, and a fiery temper. Though very affectionate when he chose, Tad was unyielding in his dislikes. His peculiar defect of speech made it difficult for strangers to understand him; but those who saw him every day had no difficulty.

The two Lincoln boys were then a little over ten and eight years of age, my two brothers being a year or two older. The elder, Horatio, or “Budd” as he was always called, was fair, like Willie Lincoln, while Hally was dark. This resemblance of the two pairs of boys was often remarked upon.

Willie and Tad were two healthy, rollicking Western boys who had never been accustomed to restraint. The notice which their father’s exalted station brought upon them was at times distasteful. Willie once said: “Was n’t there ever a President who had children before? I wish they would n’t stare at us so!”

The first time they went to church with us, Willie said: “Will he pray for us, do you think? Preachers always pray so long for Pa.” Dr. Smith did pray for them, as he recognized them in our pew. Willie’s cheeks grew very red, but Tad was sitting on the floor of the pew, and heeded not. He was so uneasy that he always sat on the floor a good part of the ser-

vice, drawing pictures, and amusing himself with whatever he could find in his pockets.

On another Sunday, when he was unusually restless, a young officer friend of ours gave him a knife, which he thought Tad could not open; but he did, and cut his finger, and I had to do it up in my best embroidered handkerchief.

On this occasion I was goaded to say, “I’ll never take you to church again, Thomas Lincoln!”—he hated of all things to be called Thomas,—“I just suffer agonies all the time!”

“Well,” said Tad, “was n’t Willie sitting up there, good as pie, and you poked me with your toe?”

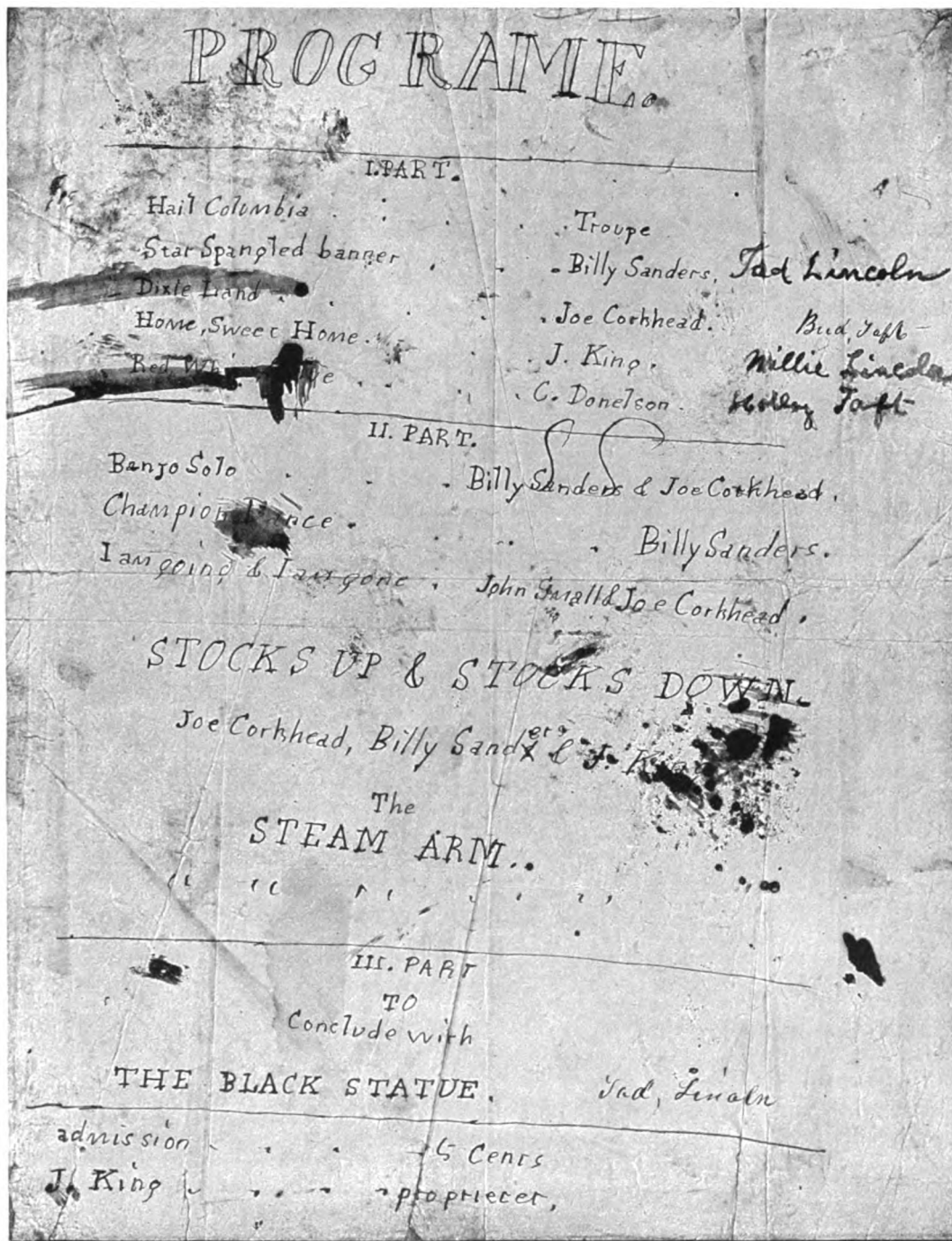
One evening, late in May, the Lincoln boys came with one of the men from the White House, saying they had tickets for a noted minstrel show then in the city. All four boys went to see the performance, and from that evening each one longed to be a minstrel! They talked incessantly about it, and, in order to make a theater, even suggested taking out some partitions in our attic, which was cut up into small bedrooms. But fortune favored them.

A verbal message came from Mrs. Lincoln: “The Madam’s compliments, and as the weather was very rainy and Willie and Tad had bad colds, might Budd and Hally stay at the White House till she returned from New York?” This was rather alarming. Who knew what might happen in a week? Mrs. Lincoln was to be absent at least a week.

Not long before this a messenger had appeared at dinner-time, asking whether Willie and Tad were with us, and saying that they had not been seen since breakfast.

They had “lost themselves” in the Capitol, after listening in the gallery of the House of Representatives as long as Tad would let them. Some gentleman had given them lunch at the restaurant of Congress, and they had played marbles with some of the pages. Tad, at least, had played with success, for marbles were fairly bursting from his pockets.

After some consultation our boys were allowed to accept Mrs. Lincoln’s invitation. As they were putting their clothes into a small valise, Willie and Tad arrived under a large and dilapidated umbrella which Tad said they had “borrowed from the cook.” All four soon



FAC-SIMILE OF THE PROGRAM PRINTED BY WILLIE LINCOLN.

left, with whoops of joy from Tad, and the fervent assertion, "You bet we'll have a good time!"

Next day I attended a review with my fa-

ther, and had a distant view of the boys, in the President's carriage, behaving with perfect propriety. The day after, a relative was brought



from camp very ill, and for a time no one thought of the boys; but the following morning, as I returned from an errand, the servant, as she opened the door, said:

"Ole Miss done gwine to de horspital, and she say, 'Arsk Miss Julie, when she come, ter

was intensified on the countenance of a negro coming down the walk; and this wild grin rippled and spread like a wave as I went on—orderlies, soldiers, doorkeepers, all wore that peculiar smile. I asked where the boys were. "Upstairs, miss," the man said; and I heard



PRESIDENT LINCOLN AND TAD.

go see 'f dem chillun doan pull down the White House yit.'"

I went to the White House. As I approached, I saw that it was standing indeed, but I noticed a strange grin on the face of an orderly holding some horses. Some soldiers lounging near also wore the same grin, which

him chuckle as he turned away. As I came along the upper corridor Tad appeared.

"Oh, Julia, come and see our circus!" he cried when he saw me. "We've got a circus in the attic. We're minstrels. I've got to be blacked up, and Willie can't get his dress on; it's too big. Pin it up, will you? Hurry!"



I took a horrified survey and said, "A circus! Does the President know it?"

"Oh, yes, he knows it," said Tad. "He does n't care; he's got some general or other in there. Come on—hurry!"

Willie was struggling with the full, long skirt and flounces of a lilac silk I had seen Mrs. Lincoln wear at an afternoon reception, while Budd wore a ruffled morning-wrapper which he was pinning up in billowy festoons.

When the boys were nearly ready to go before their "audience," Tad began singing at the top of his voice, "Old Abe Lincoln came out of the Wilderness."

"Hush!" said Budd; "the President will hear you."

"I don't care if Pa does hear, and he don't care either," said Tad. "We've got to sing that in the show." And I think he did!

But, some time after, as Tad was singing a campaign song at our house about "Old Abe splitting rails," Willie asked my mother, "Mrs. Taft, ought Tad to sing that song? Is n't it disrespectful to Pa?" Tad kicked the chair, as he always did when displeased, and said, "Everybody in this world knows Pa used to split rails."

Mama explained why she thought it in bad taste, and Tad said: "Well, I'll sing about 'John Brown's body,' then." He always obeyed my mother, though generally so headstrong.

I was at their "circus" only a short time. A curtain of sheets pinned together was stretched across one side of the attic. Their extensive "repertoire" was somewhat mixed; and they did not keep very closely to the programme reproduced here, which Willie brought to our house next day, asking me to "correct" it. I put in the second M (then considered necessary), and the real names of the actors.

Willie and Budd both made a copy of this, and the original was left in my portfolio, together with a copy Tad began to make; but after drawing a picture of General Scott on the paper, he gave up the task. Tad as the "Black Statue" was a great success. Every one who paid one cent went in, I think, though it said "five cents" on the bill. Servants, orderlies, soldiers, strangers, came and went all day.

I found a book in Mrs. Lincoln's sitting-

room (there were many new books sent to her, and she told me to take any I chose), and went to one of the windows to read.

By and by, I was aware of something large and dark looming over me, and the President—for it was he—said, "Why, it's Budd's sister. Having great times up there, hey?"

I jumped up, with my finger in the book,—for Mama told us always to rise when the President spoke to us,—answering, "Yes, sir."

He looked kindly at me for a moment, glanced at the title of the book, and passed on. He seemed tired, and I thought perhaps his visitor, the general, had "bothered" him.

Budd often carried messages from the private apartments to the office. One day Willie asked, "Why do you always call Pa 'Mr. President'? Is it more polite?"

"Oh," said Budd, "it is n't proper to call Presidents by their names."

"Well, why don't you call Ma 'Mrs. President'?"

"Why, she's just Mrs. Lincoln, only the servants call her 'the madam.'"

"Hu!" said Tad; "I shall call Pa, Pa!" and he sang, "I don't care for the corporal, I don't care for the guard," or something like that.

One day the boys would be making a "survey" of the grounds, under the guidance of some good-natured engineer, while the next, perhaps, would be spent in the Patent Office with my father. The models of locomotives and steamboats in his room were very interesting.

They spent a great deal of time at General McClellan's headquarters. He was very kind to them, and so was Mrs. McClellan. They often went to the McClellans' house to play with the baby. Budd was very fond of her.

Of course the boys attended every review. Once they rode in the staff. Willie's bridle was held by the Duc de Chartres, and Budd's by the Comte de Paris, while the aides took the smaller boys in front of them.

On another occasion,—a very hot day,—as Tad had been indisposed the day before, his mother was unwilling he should go to see the troops. The review took place across the Long Bridge, and as the President's carriage passed down the line, a cart came clattering after, drawn by a rickety horse driven by a

grinning negro boy. In it were the boys in new Zouave uniforms, their swords at a salute!

I think many old soldiers must remember that sight. Willie said the boys paid the darky a quarter from their "circus money."

About this time they formed a military company called "Mrs. Lincoln's Zouaves." She gave them a flag, and they were reviewed by the President from the portico. The Secretary of War promised to furnish light (condemned) rifles, but I do not remember whether they were ever armed or not, for the company dwindled until it was like Artemus Ward's—"all officers." Willie was colonel, Budd major, and Hally captain, while Tad refused every rank but that of drum-major. The officers had old-fashioned swords, given them either by the Secretary of War or by General McClellan.

They spent a great deal of time on the flat copper roof of the White House. It was surrounded by a stone balustrade, and here they built a cabin. The roof was by turns a "fort" and a "quarter-deck." They used to raise and lower the flag with due ceremony, and look for "strange sail" through a spy-glass.

I remember once, when "Budd's sister" ascended to the stronghold with a stern demand for the scissors, she was received at the "side" with naval etiquette. They showed me a Confederate flag at Munson's Hill, I think, and Tad said some boats on the river were "pirates."

In September Mrs. Lincoln secured a tutor for the boys, and asked to have my brothers come regularly to lessons there, thinking their presence would be an incentive to Willie and Tad. But, not long before, my father lost his government office.

After a while my father received another office, and the boys began school with Willie and Tad. The tutor had no easy post with the two younger boys, though Willie and Budd studied well, and made rapid progress.

The boys had another "show" early in January, 1862. Among their Christmas presents was a magic lantern; and for a week they gave exhibitions every evening, I think in the private dining-room. They sent the President and Messrs. Hay and Nicolay free tickets, and the President came in once.

I notice in my father's journal that Willie and Tad dined with us every day for a week,

and then took Budd and Hally back for their "show." My two brothers were often urged to stay to dinner by the President and Mrs. Lincoln; and if it was stormy she would send us word that she would keep the boys over night.

Mrs. Lincoln in those days was always kind—anxious to "let the children have a good time."

She gave me pieces of music which had been sent to her, and urged me to practise and play them to her when I came again. I never did, because I never practised, if I could help it.

She often said: "Get a bouquet for your mother before you go." Indeed, Mr. Watt always gave me flowers when I came into the conservatory. Tad was rather destructive there. He would pick the choicest blossoms, and once ate all the strawberries Mr. Watt was forcing!

The boys received a present of a pony at this time, and spent most of their waking hours riding it by turns, and petting and feeding it. Twice in January, Willie and Tad attended church and Sunday-school with us at Dr. Smith's. The last time Willie came to our house my mother noticed that his feet were wet. She made both the boys dry their feet; and as a surgeon (I think it was Dr. Barnes, of the 27th New York) was calling at the time, she asked him to take the boys home in his ambulance, which pleased them.

On February 1 Budd had a severe cold and was kept in for a few days, and Tad reported that "Willie had a cold, too." When Budd returned from a visit, he said, "Willie is dreadfully sick; he talks about me and the pony all the time." My mother went to inquire, and Mrs. Lincoln told her they feared typhoid fever.

Sometimes the President would come in, stand a while at the foot of the bed, and go out without speaking. Once he laid his arm on Budd's neck as he sat at the bedside, and leaning over, smoothed Willie's hair.

Although on February 20, at noon, my mother brought news from the White House that Willie was better, saying that he had held Budd's hand and knew him, Willie died at five o'clock of that day. Tad was overcome with grief, and was ill for some time after.

We removed North in '63, and the friendship with the Lincoln boys became only a pleasant memory.